

# Introduction to Hebrews



## The Letter

- Date: 50 to 90 AD, probably before 70 AD.
- Format: “A Christian adaptation of a synagogue homily or sermon dedicated to moving its hearers through exposition and application of OT Scripture”
  - *Cockerill NICNT: Hebrews*
- Audience: Christians drawn towards continuing the Jewish religious practices of the Old Testament.
  - Ethnic mix of both Jewish and Gentile origin.
  - Probably located in Rome.



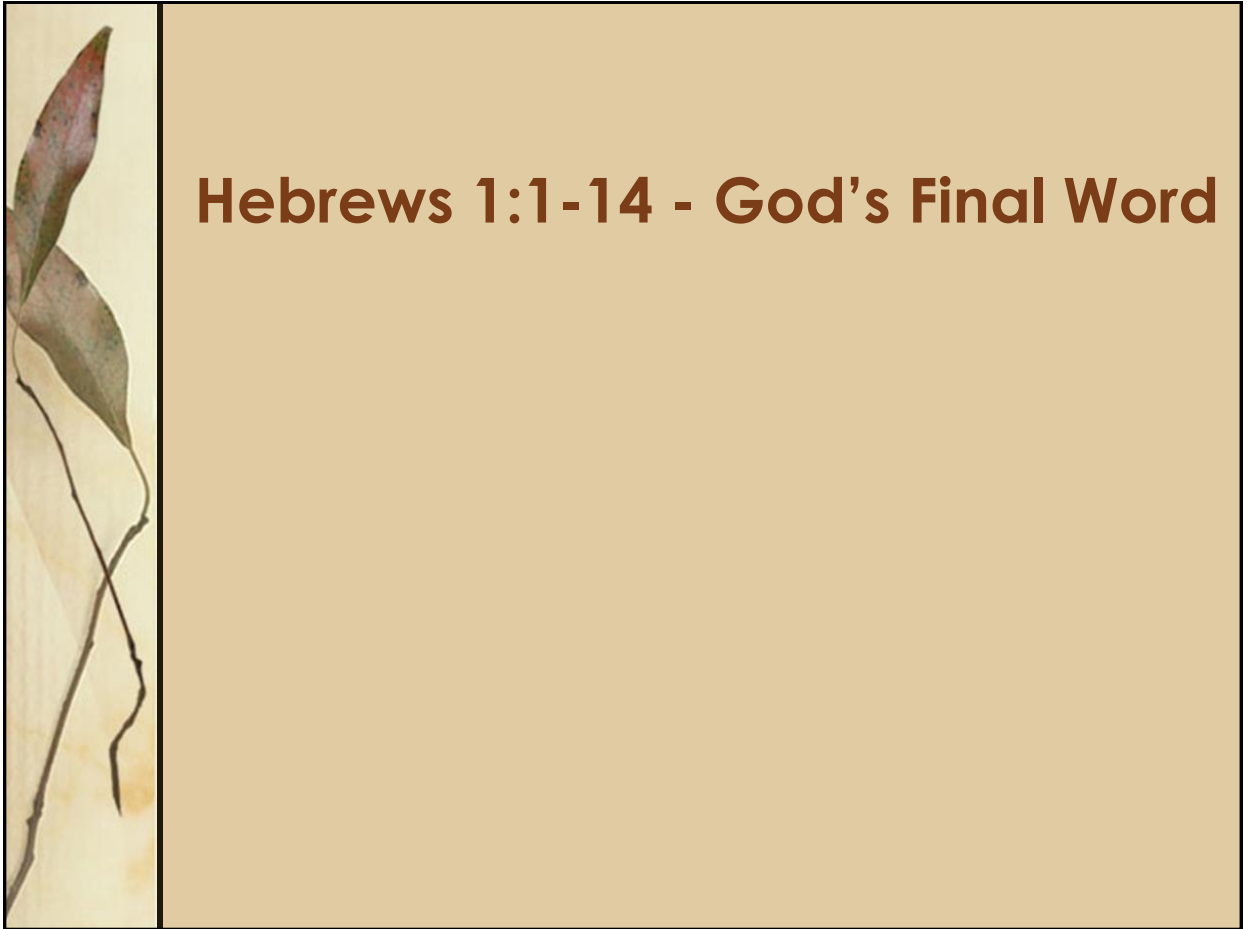
## The Author

- Anonymous Pastor
  - Master of Greek, rhetoric, and the Old Testament.
  - Personally acquainted with the audience and deeply concerned for their spiritual welfare.
- Best candidate: Apollos
  - <sup>ESV</sup> **Acts 18:24** Now a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was an eloquent man, competent in the Scriptures. <sup>25</sup> He had been instructed in the way of the Lord. And being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, though he knew only the baptism of John. <sup>26</sup> He began to speak boldly in the synagogue, but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him and explained to him the way of God more accurately. <sup>27</sup> And when he wished to cross to Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him. When he arrived, he greatly helped those who through grace had believed, <sup>28</sup> for he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, showing by the Scriptures that the Christ was Jesus.



## Major Themes

1. Jesus stands in complete continuity with and fulfills all previous revelation of God.
2. The Old Covenant with its priesthood and sacrifices has always been and continues to be a type and foreshadowing of the full sufficiency of Christ as Savior. It was never meant to be an adequate means of salvation in itself.
3. Those who live by faith in the word of God constitute the one people of God throughout history. Thus the examples of both the faithful and the unfaithful along with God's promises, warnings, and words of encouragement to his people of old retain their validity with increased urgency because of what Christ has done. To be faithful today is to join the faithful of all time.





## God has Spoken

- <sup>ESV</sup> **Hebrews 1:1** Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, <sup>2</sup> but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.
  - *in not by*
  - <sup>NAS</sup> **Hosea 1:2** When the LORD first spoke through Hosea, the LORD said ...
  - <sup>NAS</sup> **2 Corinthians 5:19** namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself ...
- We live in continuity with the people of the Old Testament as the one family of God.
  - *our fathers*
- We have God's final and superior revelation in Christ.
  - Mark 12: The Parable of the Vine Growers



## The OT Was Written For Us

- <sup>NAS</sup> **1 Corinthians 10:1** For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea ...<sup>6</sup> Now these things happened as examples for us ... <sup>11</sup> Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.





## The OT Was Written For Us

- <sup>NAS</sup> **Luke 24:26** "Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?" <sup>27</sup> And beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.
- <sup>NIV</sup> **2 Timothy 3:14** But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, <sup>15</sup> and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>16</sup> All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,



## We Live at the End of Days

- <sup>NAS</sup> **Hebrews 1:2** in these last days has spoken to us in His Son ...
  - Lit., "at the end of days he spoke to us in a son"
- <sup>NAS</sup> **Jeremiah 23:20** "The anger of the LORD will not turn back Until He has performed and carried out the purposes of His heart; In the last days you will clearly understand it.
- <sup>NAS</sup> **Ezekiel 38:16** ...It will come about in the last days that I shall bring you against My land, in order that the nations may know Me when I shall be sanctified through you before their eyes
- <sup>NAS</sup> **Daniel 10:14** "Now I have come to give you an understanding of what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision pertains to the days yet future."



## God's Kingdom: Now But Not Yet

- <sup>NAS</sup> **Hebrews 1:3** And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high (now) ... <sup>13</sup> But to which of the angels has He ever said, "Sit at My right hand, Until I make Thine enemies A footstool for Thy feet?" (not yet)



## God's Kingdom: Now But Not Yet

- <sup>NAS</sup> **Romans 8:18** For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. <sup>19</sup> For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. <sup>20</sup> For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope
- <sup>NAS</sup> **1 John 3:2** Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is.



## Jesus Fully Reveals God

<sup>NAS</sup> **Hebrews 1:1** God ... <sup>2</sup> in these last days has spoken to us in His Son ...

A. appointed heir of all things (v.2)

B. through whom also He made the world. (v.2)

C. He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature (v.3)

B'. upholds all things by the word of His power (v.3)

A'. made purification of sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high (v.3)

➤ Jesus, the exalted man (A, A') is also the creator and sovereign ruler of the universe (B, B') who manifests the fullness of the glory and image of God (C).



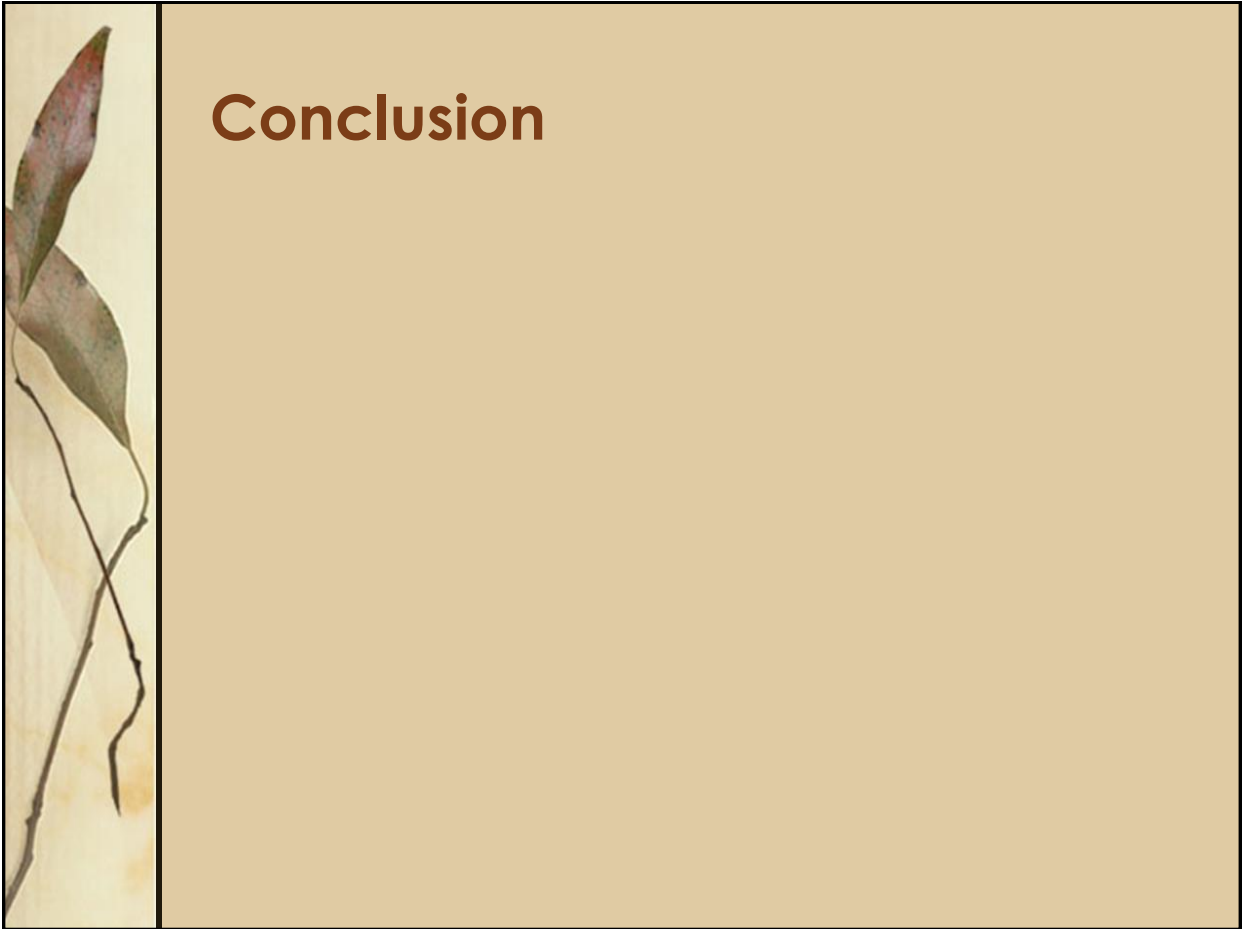
## Jesus: Divine Son

- **Hebrews 1:2** in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. <sup>3</sup> And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power ... <sup>8</sup> But of the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom. <sup>9</sup> You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions." <sup>10</sup> And, "You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of your hands; <sup>11</sup> they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment, <sup>12</sup> like a robe you will roll them up, like a garment they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will have no end."



## Jesus: Exalted Man

- <sup>ESV</sup> **Hebrews 1:4** having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. <sup>5</sup> For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you"? Or again, "I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son"? <sup>6</sup> And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him." <sup>7</sup> Of the angels he says, "He makes his angels winds, and his ministers a flame of fire." ... <sup>13</sup> And to which of the angels has he ever said, "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet"? <sup>14</sup> Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?



**Conclusion**





## God Has Spoken to Us

Lit **Hebrews 1:1** God ... <sup>2</sup> at the end of days has spoken to us in a Son ...

A. appointed heir of all things (v.2)

B. through whom also He made the world. (v.2)

C. He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature (v.3)

B'. upholds all things by the word of His power (v.3)

A'. made purification of sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high (v.3)

- Jesus, the exalted man is also the creator and sovereign ruler of the universe who manifests the fullness of the glory and image of God. He is the final and perfect revelation of God, and the fulfilment of all earlier revelation.



## The Voice of God

- <sup>NIV</sup> **Psalm 29:1** Ascribe to the LORD, O mighty ones, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. <sup>2</sup> Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness. <sup>3</sup> The voice of the LORD is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the LORD thunders over the mighty waters. <sup>4</sup> The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is majestic.



## Listen to Him

- <sup>NAS</sup> **2 Corinthians 4:6** For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.
- <sup>NAS</sup> **Mark 9:2** And six days later, Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John, and brought them up to a high mountain by themselves. And He was transfigured before them; <sup>3</sup> and His garments became radiant and exceedingly white, as no launderer on earth can whiten them. <sup>4</sup> And Elijah appeared to them along with Moses; and they were talking with Jesus ... <sup>7</sup> Then a cloud formed, overshadowing them, and a voice came out of the cloud, "This is My beloved Son, listen to Him!"